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### **Florez Appointed to Fill PNM Endowed Chair**

*Endowed chair to reside in UNM College of Education for 10 years*

The UNM College of Education will be the next beneficiary of the PNM Endowed Chair. Originally endowed by the PNM Foundation in 1985, the rotating PNM Endowed Chair will be filled by Dr. Viola Florez, former dean of the UNM College of Education and interim provost, announced the UNM Foundation. The UNM Board of Regents approved the three-year appointment at its August meeting.

Established with a gift of \$750,000 to the UNM Foundation and matched by the State of New Mexico, the PNM Endowed Chair has rotated among various colleges and schools at UNM over the last 23 years. It will reside in the College of Education for 10 years.

"Since its inception in 1983, the PNM Foundation has demonstrated its commitment to education in New Mexico," said Diane Ogawa, executive director, PNM Resources Foundation. "We are pleased that the PNM Chair at the UNM College of Education will fund innovative programs to provide New Mexico's students with the opportunity for increased academic achievement, personal success, and quality of life through education."

The PNM Endowed Chair for P-20 (pre-school through graduate school) Educational Renewal will focus efforts on advancing student success and professional development opportunities for teachers. The Chair's activities will promote collaborations among multiple education disciplines; enhance, improve and coordinate existing outreach programs; research best practices for teaching and learning; and identify and disseminate innovative resources to help students achieve college success.

"In these challenging times, the Chair's efforts in educational reform will provide unique opportunities for the college to take a leadership role in the state of New Mexico," says College of Education Dean Richard Howell. "We are especially pleased to have Vi Florez serving in the College of Education's first PNM Foundation endowed chair to provide energy and direction for statewide educational renewal."

Throughout her career, Florez has been dedicated to academic quality and access and equity for all students. At UNM, Florez has focused on diversity, faculty investment, improvement of undergraduate and graduate education, and P-20 education as her benchmark priorities.

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Her major accomplishments include achieving national rankings for the UNM College of Education in *U.S. News and World Report*, increasing faculty and student diversity, securing funding for building renewal and new construction, and outreach with educational partners.

The UNM Foundation, an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, promotes excellence at the University of New Mexico by raising, investing and managing private gifts through the cultivation of long-term partnerships with donors and matching their interests to the University's priorities.